



**Chairmanship 2003**  
**Permanent Representation of the**  
**Netherlands to the OSCE**

**ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR CONFERENCE ON RACISM, XENOPHOBIA**  
**AND DISCRIMINATION**  
**Hofburg Conference Centre, Vienna: 4-5 September 2003**

**I - Overview**

The Tenth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Porto urged "...the convening of separately designated human dimension events on issues addressed in this decision, including on the topics of anti-Semitism, discrimination and racism and xenophobia." The OSCE held a Conference on Anti-Semitism on 19-20 June in Vienna. This second Conference will cover the remaining issues to be dealt with under the Porto decision.

The main areas covered will be racism, xenophobia and discrimination, including violence and discrimination against Muslims, and those perceived to be Muslim. The Conference will examine the causes and manifestations with a focus on the common grounds related to discrimination, and look at ways of combating these problems.

The aim of the Conference will be to exchange information on the issues, identify and share good practices and contribute to developing a holistic, co-ordinated, complementary and coherent approach by the OSCE in tackling the issues. The emphasis will be on practical and concrete action at the international, national and local level. The Conference should demonstrate that the OSCE, as a region of cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, with its experience of the inter-relationship of security and the human dimension, could bring added value to the international and national efforts to tackle the issues.

**II - Sessions**

Opening Session: Setting the Context

*Opening words*            Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria  
                                  Video Message from Colin Powell, US Secretary of State  
                                  Mr. Frank Majoor, Secretary General, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

*Keynote Speakers:*        Ms. Jean Augustine, Secretary of State, Multiculturalism/Status of Women,  
                                  Canada  
                                  Dr. Mustafa Cerić Reisu-l-Ulema, Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina  
                                  Lord Ahmed of Rotherham, The House of Lords, United Kingdom

Prof. Dr. Ioanna Kuçuradi, Director of Application and Research Center for Human Rights and Philosophy, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Chair of the Turkish National Committee of the Human Rights Education Decade

Points to be addressed may include, *inter alia*:

- Why hold this meeting and why hold it now;
- Defining the problem of racism, xenophobia and discrimination and its manifestations throughout the OSCE region;
- The role of Governments in monitoring and responding to incidents.

Session 1: Legislative, institutional mechanisms and governmental action including law enforcement.

*Moderator:* Ambassador Hans Winkler, Legal Advisor, Director, Office of International Law, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria

*Introducers:* Mr. Thoraval, President of the National Consultative Human Rights Commission, France  
The Honorable J.C. Watts, former Member of US Congress  
Rolf Ekéus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Context: OSCE Participating States have expressed on numerous occasions their commitment to strengthening human rights standards. Combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination are key components of such activities. The OSCE has considerable experience in the work on ethnic, religious and national minorities, and other vulnerable groups, and the challenges they face as the victims of all types of discrimination. The OSCE has acquired experience in the need to balance human rights safeguards with security concerns, particularly in the field of law enforcement.

A number of Participating States are also in the process of transposing EU standards on non-discrimination into national legislation and establishing equal treatment bodies. This experience, and the resultant non-discrimination framework, should inform the discussion and debate. A number of OSCE Participating States have also recently introduced legislation aimed at combating hate speech, incitement to racial hatred and race or religion as an aggravating factor in criminal offences.

The OSCE convened a conference on anti-Semitism in June 2003. The outcome and recommendations of this conference should be valuable in developing a common framework to tackle racism, xenophobia and discrimination in all its related forms.

Building on the work and acquired expertise of its activities undertaken by ODIHR, the HCNM and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, this session should aim to draw the governmental approaches within an overall strategy that encompasses IGO work. This strategy should set the context for action within a comprehensive and coherent framework. This session will therefore encourage discussion and debate on the principles, key components and main actors of a legislative and institutional framework, highlighting good practice and the role of independent specialised bodies.

Points to be addressed may include, *inter alia*:

- Appropriate anti-discrimination legislation and national experience with criminal prosecution of violence;
- A discussion of hate crime legislation and good police practices;
- Law enforcement and the judiciary, including training;
- Government policies and practices at national, regional and local levels, including the examination of the role of independent specialised bodies.

Lunch: Rt. Hon. Bruce George, MP, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

## Session 2: The Role of Governments and Civil Society in Promoting Tolerance

*Moderator:* Mr. Gert Weisskirchen, Member of the Bundestag, Germany

*Introducer:* Ms. Beate Winkler, Director, EU Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia  
Mr. Claudio Moreno, former President of the Italian Interministerial committee for human rights, Italy  
Prof. Barbara John, Former Commissioner for Integration of Foreigners, Berlin, Germany

Context:

The OSCE acting in concert with its participating States has highlighted the fundamental role and responsibility of Governments in activities to counter racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Governments through legislative measures, institutional mechanisms and policy and practice define the context for the development of human rights and human security safeguards and protection. Experience and practice has demonstrated that in certain areas of activities, Governments, when co-operating in partnership with civil society bodies and Inter-governmental Organisations can enhance the effectiveness of such activities.

A number of OSCE participating States have developed mechanisms to monitor, report and assess the situation of racism, xenophobia, and discrimination including the role of independent specialised bodies at the national and regional level. The session can discuss and debate the opportunities presented by such developments, identify their main activities and responsibilities and ways to enhance the cooperation of such bodies at the national and regional level. The session can encourage those participating States that have yet to establish such bodies to do so.

A number of OSCE participating States have developed national action plans (NAPs) to combat racism, xenophobia, and discrimination. These plans establish a general framework for comprehensive and coherent approaches that include cooperation with civil society and the various communities of those subject to racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Building on this experience and expertise this session can examine and assess the approaches developed through NAPs with a view to highlighting good practice.

In addition, several participating States have at the community level encouraged racial and religious groups to develop policies and practices that promote tolerance and equality. This seminar session can report on the successes of these programs, as well as discuss and debate suggestions to improve the

overall efficiency of these local community activities. Furthermore, a particular emphasis for this discussion could be the involvement of local authorities and community actors in the design, implementation and review of activities to combat racism.

Points to be addressed may include, *inter alia*:

- The role of governmental bodies, IGOs and NGOs in reporting, monitoring and combating racism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance;
- Cooperation among independent specialised bodies at the national and regional level;
- The effectiveness of dialogue as a mechanism to support understanding and mutual respect;
- Inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and development of civic tolerance building programmes.

### Session 3: Education

*Moderator:* Ms. Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, PhD, Member of the ODIHR Advisory Panel on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland

*Introducer:* Mag. phil. Manfred Wirtitsch, Director, Department for Political Education, Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, Austria  
Mr. Michael Steele, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Maryland  
Monseigneur Guy Harpigny, Bishop of Tournai, Belgium

Context:

OSCE participating States have recognised that human rights and human security are inextricably linked as promotion and implementation of human rights are an integral part of human security. Human rights education and learning can make a vital contribution to human security, being a strong instrument for conflict prevention and the prevention of human rights violations. Human rights education is also an instrument to support respect for diversity, culture and equality and enhances OSCE values by rooting them in different cultural traditions, taking into account the cultural diversity of communities and societies within a universal human rights framework.

Education is key to strengthening society and improving the opportunities of individual members of society by improving knowledge, building capabilities, raising awareness and providing skills to meet the future challenges of societies. Education contributes to building a stake in society for all members irrespective of their racial, ethnic or religious backgrounds and countering social exclusion. This session could discuss elements of educational strategies in support of social cohesion, respect for diversity and the promotion of tolerance, in particular the role of governments, educational institutions both through the development of curricula aimed at practitioners and target groups and training practices for State authority officials.

A number of participating States have supported initiatives to promote intercultural education, equal access to education and developed curricula which takes into account a diverse classroom. In addition, a number of participating States continue to support human rights training programmes aimed at State authorities.

This session can debate and discuss strategies and approaches to ensure equal and effective access to education for all, identifying issues that prevent this realisation and good practices in dealing with

them and make recommendations. Participants could discuss the effectiveness of human rights education initiatives and point ways forward to meet the various challenges of providing human security within diverse societies.

Points to be addressed may include, *inter alia*:

- Human rights education and training to support human security;
- The role of education in promoting tolerance;
- Teacher-training programmes;
- Teaching of history;
- School curricula;
- Elimination of discrimination tendencies and prejudices in society.

Dinner: Sir Peter Ustinov, Institut für Konfliktforschung, Vienna

Session 4: Information and awareness raising: The role of the media in conveying and countering prejudice

*Moderator:* Mr. Michael Fedotov, Secretary of the Union of Journalists of the Russian Federation, Russian Federation

*Introducer:* Ms. Heléne Loow, Historian, Swedish Board member of the EUMC, Sweden  
Mr. Gérard Kerforn, MRAP, France  
Professor Dimitrijevic, Director, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, Member, European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)

Context:

The OSCE Participating States recognised the importance of freedom of expression and the role of media when they established the institution of OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Freedom of expression is a basic civil and political right and a fundamental component of democratic societies. Experience in the OSCE region has demonstrated that the media can either play a positive or a negative role on the issues of racism, xenophobia and discrimination.

The advent of new technologies has introduced a variety of challenges such as hate speech on the Internet, and the sale and the distribution of prohibited racist material. The OSCE Conference on Freedom of the Media and the Internet in June 2003 addressed a number of these issues and the results of this discussion should inform this session of the conference. Within the context of these previous discussions, this session can consider ways to uphold the freedom of speech, while countering racism and xenophobia. In addition, the discussion can identify potential methods for the media to regulate itself, and ways to sponsor cooperation among the media, the government, and IGOs, in order to meet the current challenges.

Information dissemination and awareness raising on activities and developments to counter racism and xenophobia is a major part of government publicity campaigns to reach civil society in general. Experience has demonstrated that where governments take the lead and disseminate a clear message they can enhance legislative and institutional developments and contribute to improving understanding

about policy and the broader values of human rights, non-discrimination and tolerance. This session can examine examples of successful campaigns to combat racism and help set information and awareness raising within a comprehensive and coherent framework.

Points to be addressed may include, *inter alia*:

- Public opinion and role of the media, including new technologies (*inter alia*, the Internet);
- information campaigns on tolerance and their effectiveness;
- Reporting and interpretation of developments in the OSCE area;
- Problems regarding the dissemination of hate speech and racist materials and ways to counteract this.

### Closing Session: Conclusions and Recommendations

In this session the four moderators will summarise discussions and key recommendations made in the sessions on how the OSCE participating States and OSCE structures can strengthen their efforts to combat Racism, Xenophobia, and Discrimination. The results of the conference will be brought forward to the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw in October 2003, where a day will be dedicated to discussing prevention of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

In order to more accurately reflect the results of the meeting, participants are encouraged to submit in writing to the Chairman-in-Office any recommendations they wish to make. It would be helpful if participants could specify for whom the recommendations are intended, for example, individual OSCE participating States, the OSCE as a whole, OSCE structures and institutions, such as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, or OSCE field operations.